

REPLY

6

OF

COL. ABERT AND MR. MARKOE

TO THE

HON. MR. TAPPAN,

OF THE

UNITED STATES SENATE.

WASHINGTON:
WM. Q. FORCE, PRINTER.
1843.

INTRODUCTION.

IN consequence of the attack made upon us by the Hon. Mr. Tappan, of the Senate, in a Report from him submitted a day or two before its adjournment, we have been reduced to the necessity, either tacitly to acknowledge the justice of his observations, by quietly submitting to them, or to reply. We have determined to reply, and submit to the judgment of the public the following papers. They consist of :

- 1st. A letter from the undersigned to the Honorable Mr. Walker, of the Senate.
- 2d. Mr. Walker's reply.
- 3d. A letter from the Honorable Mr. Preston.
- 4th. The bill which Mr. Walker had referred to the Library Committee.
- 5th. The "remarks" which the undersigned handed to Mr. Walker, and which were referred to the Library Committee with the bill.
- 6th. The "report" which the Honorable Mr. Tappan thought proper to make upon "the bill" and the "remarks."

J. J. ABERT,
F. MARKOE, JR.

WASHINGTON, *April 20, 1843.*

P A P E R S .

LETTER FROM COL. ABERT AND MR. MARKOE TO THE HON. MR. WALKER.

WASHINGTON, *March 10, 1843.*

Hon. ROBERT J. WALKER, *U. S. Senator :*

DEAR SIR: We beg leave to call your attention to Senate Document No. 233, of the 28th ultimo, being a report made by the Hon. Mr. Tappan, as from the Joint Committee of Congress on the Library, to which had been referred "A bill for the preservation of the collection of natural curiosities furnished by the Exploring Squadron, and from other sources;" together with "remarks submitted by Mr. Markoe and Col. Abert."

The "remarks" to which the "report" refers, were made, as you will recollect, and as is distinctly stated in the first paragraph of them, at your request; were intended to satisfy your mind of the propriety of the measure we wished you to befriend; and were addressed to you not only as the well known friend and advocate of the Institute, but also as the chairman of one of its important committees, and as a director, and consequently a member of the Board of Management. They passed into the hands of the committee, of which Mr. Tappan is a member, without any desire on our part, and without our knowledge, (certainly, however, with no unwillingness that they should be read by the whole world,) and under these circumstances, we respectfully submit to you whether the attack upon us by the Hon. Senator has not been 'as unprovoked as a reference to our remarks will prove it to have been unmerited.

We cannot suppose, as Mr. Tappan supposes, that you had not read our "remarks" before you laid them before the Library Committee, and therefore take it for granted, that you did not perceive the "direct insult" to the committee, which is so palpable to Mr. Tappan, (but which is not pointed out by him,) or you would not have consented to be the medium through which the "insult" was conveyed. On the contrary, we have every reason to suppose that you had made yourself perfectly acquainted with the character and scope of our "remarks"—remarks hastily put together, and meant to afford hints and memoranda for your consideration and use, to illustrate the necessity or advantage of the measure recommended. They were certainly not intended or adapted to give offence in any quarter. We will, therefore, occupy your time by pointing to two paragraphs, only, of the "report," which we quote in answer to two serious allegations made against us by the Hon. Senator. You will judge whether they have any just foundation.

Mr. Tappan says: "The case presents two officers of the Government, one at the head of a bureau, the other a clerk in one of the public

offices, who ask, as a matter of right, that they should have the supervision of a very important literary and scientific work, the publication of which Congress has thought proper to intrust to one of its regular committees."

We must deny that any such case is presented, or that it can be justly inferred from our "remarks." Our "remarks" on this subject were as follows: "We desire it to be distinctly understood, that our reasoning has no reference to the publication of the results of the voyage, but is limited, solely, to the preservation, arrangement, and exhibition of the collections. We think, however, that the Institute might be able to give acceptable opinions, even in reference to the publication, its form, and style of execution. But as there is an anxiety to possess this power, by others, and as it is already placed elsewhere, we do not seek to interfere with it; not doubting that in all its parts it will equal similar publications by other Governments, and justify the anticipations that are now entertained of it by the learned world."

You are well aware, that there are appropriations of *two distinct* characters, in respect to the Exploring Squadron, and the publication of its results; (the Hon. Mr. Tappan does not appear to have kept this distinction in his mind;)—*one*, for the publication of the history of the voyage, the narrative, and scientific descriptions; the *other*, for the preservation, preparation, and exhibition of the collections. It is the *latter*, only, that we have ever manifested a desire to see placed under the control of the Institute, which, it appears to us, is the most suitable agent for such purposes, and the more particularly, as these collections had been placed by the Executive under its care.

The other allegation made against us by Mr. Tappan is equally incorrect. He says: "But the great point with Messrs. Abert and Markoe seems to be, to get hold of the appropriations made by Congress, to enable the Committee to execute the law."

The law to which Mr. Tappan refers, relates to the *publication* of the proceedings of the Expedition; the remarks made by us relate to a system for the *preservation and exhibition* of the collections.

Our remarks on this head were: "That *the Institute* should be the organ of the Government in the arrangement and preservation of its collections, and in the *supervision* of the appropriations which the Government may make for *those purposes*." We speak of the *Institute*, of which we are merely members, and of the "Board of Management," of which we are but two out of seventeen. To this "Board of Management," we think the power appropriately belongs, and in its hands, we hope yet to see placed the management of whatever relates to the arrangement, preservation, and exhibition of the collections. It is clear to us that no better arrangement could be made. With the superintendence of the publication, and of the appropriation which belongs to it, (duties assigned to the Library Committee by law,) we have not expressed a desire to interfere, and forbear, as we have forborne, to make any remarks upon them, except to express the inoffensive hope that the wishes and opinions of the naturalists themselves will be consulted, and be allowed to have a proper weight.

Our "remarks," in continuation of the above quotation, were: "The

organization of the Institute renders it peculiarly deserving of the confidence of the Government, as it can offer, as an agent for Government property, and Government expenditures, a Board of its own officers."

"The officers of the Institute, consist of a President, Vice President, two Secretaries, one Treasurer, and twelve Directors; six of these twelve Directors are the heads of the Government Department: namely, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of War, the Secretary of the Navy, the Attorney General, and the Postmaster General. These are Directors, *ex-officio*, and constitute the Departments through which all Government expenditures are made. Six others are elected by the Institute, from amongst its members; these six, at present are, the Hon. Mr. Woodbury, the Hon. Mr. Preston,* Mr. Dayton, Fourth Auditor, Com. Warrington, Col. Totten, of the Corps of Engineers, and Col. Abert, of the Corps of Topographical Engineers."

"These are the whole of those who are recognized by the charter as officers of the Institute," and constitute by the charter, "A board of management of the *fiscal* concerns of the Institute."

The quotations speak for themselves, and we will trouble you with but few more remarks. Mr. Tappan, in the beginning of his report, most truly says, that, "The 'remarks' of Messrs. Markoe and Abert, are not to be considered as the act of the National Institute." The "remarks" neither purport, nor pretend to be the act of the Institute. And we beg leave further to say, that neither are Messrs. Abert and Markoe the "Board of Management for the *fiscal* concerns of the Institute," under the supervision of which they suggested the expediency of placing the appropriations which Government might make for the *arrangement and preservation* of its collections.

It seems to have given offence to the honorable gentlemen, that in our remarks we should have proposed that the Institute should be authorized "to furnish to the persons who shall be employed in the writing or publication of the voyage and discoveries of the Exploring Squadron, all desired facilities." We really are at a loss to perceive the offensive matter in this sentence. It has no allusion to the Library Committee, for they were neither to write nor to publish. The law invested them with power to enter into contract for the publication, and each member of the Scientific Corps of the Squadron would, we presume, be required to furnish the narrative of his observations. The persons, therefore, employed in the "writing or publication of the voyage," were these scientific men, and the contractors. If furnished with all desired facilities, it would be all they ought to have, all they could want; and if furnished by the Institute, there would be some agent responsible for the specimens, and interested in seeing that they were returned after being taken out of the building, by either the describer, the engraver, or the publisher. The Library Committee expired on the 4th of March, and there will be no committee until after a new election by the next Congress. We believe the committee cannot appoint an agent to have a longer existence than itself; hence, appeared in our judgment, the propriety that the Institute should be invested with the care of the collections.

* The Hon. Mr. Walker's name should have been inserted here in the place of that of Mr. Preston.

Had the Hon. Senator published our "remarks" with his "report," as was due, in all fairness, this letter would have been unnecessary; for the "remarks" contain, in our opinion, ample refutation of the errors of the "report." We deem it wholly unnecessary, also, to point out to you other mistakes into which the Hon. Senator has fallen, and which have been, on his motion, published in his "report" to the Senate. We rather limit ourselves, in conclusion, to soliciting your advice, as to the best mode of correcting the erroneous impressions which the language of the Senator is calculated to make upon the public.

We remain, dear Sir, with great esteem and respect, your most obedient servants,

J. J. ABERT,
F. MARKOE, JR.

REPLY OF MR. WALKER.

WASHINGTON, *March*, 1843.

GENTLEMEN: The "report" to which you refer, has been perused by me with extreme regret. This report is upon a bill introduced by me into the Senate, and referred upon my motion to the Committee on the Library, together with your "remarks." These "remarks" then were, and still are regarded by me as unexceptionable in every respect; they were illustrative of the objects designed by me to be accomplished by the bill, and an argument in its favor, and as such, were submitted with the bill to the committee. The bill contains no clause in regard to the publication of the results of the Exploring Squadron, but relates exclusively to the preservation and exchange of the natural curiosities described in the bill. Such was all the legislation desired by me, and advocated in your remarks. It is true that your remarks refer incidentally to the publication, but only to disclaim any desire to interfere with it in any manner whatever. Yet the report is based upon the idea that you had desired to deprive the committee of the control of this publication, and to substitute in that respect the supervision of the National Institute. In this particular the misapprehension of the report is most extraordinary, and I can account for it in no other manner, than from the supposition, that this report, being made almost at the close of the session, and when the attention of its author was chiefly engrossed by other important subjects, this bill and your remarks may have received but a very cursory perusal, and hence the report has confounded the preservation and exchange of the collections, with the publication of the narrative of the Exploring Squadron. To a similar cause must be attributed the statement of the report, that you had desired "to get hold of the appropriations made by Congress to enable the committee to execute the law." No such object was contemplated or proposed by you, nor did you desire "to get hold" of any appropriations, but only that the moneys which might be assigned by Congress for the preservation of the collections designated in the bill, might be disbursed, not by you, but by the National Institute. And here, as your motives have thus been assailed, you must permit me to remark, that, whilst neither of you have

ever received, or ever desired to receive for yourselves any moneys for your services to the National Institute, you have both contributed largely in valuable donations, and also in cash, towards the success of this Institution. A large portion also of that time which others have devoted to fashionable amusements, has been employed by you in advancing the cause of science, as connected with the successful progress of the National Institute. Your services have been great, arduous, and unremitting; they have been wholly gratuitous, and with no expectation of any pecuniary reward whatever. These labors also, of yourselves and others, and especially of our distinguished President, Mr. Poinsett, have already accomplished much. They have attracted the applause, and secured the co-operation of the friends of science every where, and require only energy, patience, and perseverance, with such assistance as is suggested in your remarks, to place our own country in a few years far in advance in the cause of science, as it already is, in all that relates to government and laws. That the author of the report can be opposed to such an Institution, and to such results, cannot be. He is a man of learning and science, and in the success of his labors in promoting the publication of the results of the Exploring Squadron, and in doing full justice to its accomplished commander and his worthy associates, and the able scientific men connected with the Expedition, no one will take more pleasure than each of you.

Having supported the appropriation to be disbursed by the Library Committee by my vote in the Senate, and accompanying remarks, it is incredible that I should now desire to divert that appropriation or disbursement, or that you should have desired my aid for such a purpose, or that I, had such been my object or yours, would have referred my bill or your remarks to the very committee whom the report supposes it was your design to deprive of the supervision of this publication.

As to the best mode of correcting the erroneous impressions made by the "report," in relation to which you ask my opinion, I would advise the publication of this correspondence, together with my bill and your accompanying remarks, with the "report," so as to enable the public to form an impartial judgment of the whole subject.

Yours, with great respect and esteem,

R. J. WALKER.

To Col. J. J. ABERT and FRANCIS MARKOE, Esqs.

LETTER FROM THE HON. MR. PRESTON TO MR. MARKOE.

COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA, *April*, 1843.

MY DEAR SIR: Having had ample occasion to witness the devotion which you and Col. Abert have manifested to the National Institute, you may imagine the surprise and mortification with which I have seen the total misconception of your motives and conduct in regard to it, in Mr.

Tappan's report to the Senate. To the unwearied and enthusiastic exertions of yourselves and a few other gentlemen, animated, as it seemed to me, by nothing but a pure love of science, that Institution was mainly indebted for its origin, and the eminent success which has attended it from the beginning. I can say with entire certainty, that my own interest in it was stimulated and sustained by you, and that I was continually made ashamed of how little I felt, and how little I did, while I saw the unabated zeal and unrecompensed labor which you bestowed upon it. While I wished well to the Institute from a conviction that it would promote the advancement of science, you and he particularly devoted yourselves to it with that deep enthusiasm which a more intimate knowledge can alone excite, and upon which all scientific projects must depend for their success. Men in public station, or the munificent *rich* may contribute the means, but the vital principle of all such institutions is found in the hearts of those who are willing to work night and day, and whose labor is a labor of love. I was deeply impressed that the Institute had found in you and Col. Abert, precisely such agents, and my high hopes of its ultimate success arose from the fact that it had found such. I by no means mean to say that there are not associated with you other gentlemen, equally impelled by as earnest and disinterested motives, but this I will say, that a vast deal of the labor was thrown upon you two, and that, to my mind, the discretion and wisdom of the Institute was evinced in the selection of such agents. I speak of Col. Abert and yourself especially, because you and he are made the subjects of attack.

It is with great pleasure that I bear this testimony in your behalf. If I had been in the Senate when the report was made, I think I would have been able to satisfy Mr. Tappan of the mistake into which he had fallen; but at all events, I would have put upon record my opinion of the purity of purpose, and the wisdom of the plans, which have characterized the conduct of Col. Abert and yourself throughout.

I am entirely satisfied that if the Government collection derived from the Exploring Expedition, or from any other source, be not to a great extent subject to the control of a scientific association, or of men animated by a philosophic spirit, which spirit alone brings them to the task, it will not increase, and will be dilapidated. Our Government is peculiarly incapable of a proper superintendence of scientific institutes. In the first place, it may be said, that it has no constitutional power; and if it had, the tenure of office is so liable to change, that in a department so removed from interests of intense excitement, negligence and decay would soon creep in. It therefore seemed to me from the beginning, that accessions to science, incidentally made, like the collections of the Exploring Expedition, should be deposited for arrangement, preservation, and exhibition, with such a society as the National Institute; the Government retaining the property, while the Institute has the use of it, or rather while the Institute makes it useful to the public. Without some such arrangement, the Government will find that its valuable specimens will be lost, or moulder away in forgotten boxes, or become a mere mass of rubbish.

I am persuaded that Mr. Tappan, upon such explanations as you and other gentlemen in Washington can give him, will perceive the injustice of his remarks. He has an earnest love of science and liberal learning

of all sorts, and, without some obvious misconception, cannot fail to sympathize and co-operate with gentlemen, who, with such singleness of purpose and such broad intelligence as yourself and other of our friends of the Institute, have at heart the same objects with himself.

I am, my dear Sir, your obedient servant,

WM. C. PRESTON.

FRANCIS MARKOE, JR., Esq.

A BILL

For the preservation of the collection of natural curiosities furnished by the Exploring Squadron, and from other sources.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, That the board of management of the National Institute be, and is hereby, invested with the custody of the specimens of natural history, and other curiosities, which have been received, or which may have been received, or which may hereafter be received, from the Exploring Squadron, and from other sources, with authority to make all necessary arrangements to preserve and exhibit the same, to regulate the number and compensation of persons employed on said duty, and to superintend the disbursements relating thereto.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted, That the said board is hereby authorized to exchange any of the duplicates of said collections, with other institutions, or with State authorities, or with individuals.*

REMARKS SUBMITTED BY MR. MARKOE AND COL. ABERT TO THE HON. MR. WALKER.

In conformity with the desire you expressed, that we should put on paper the substance of our conversation with you, on certain matters connected with the Institute, we submit the following to your consideration. There are several points, which, to our experience and reflections, are essential to the prosperity of the Institute, and to the great objects for which it was chartered. These are:

First, That the Institute should be the organ of the Government, in the arrangement and preservation of the collections, and in the supervision of the appropriations which the Government may make for those purposes.

Second, That the Institute should have the power of disposing of all duplicates, by a system of exchanges with other Institutes, or with States, or with individuals.

As all the Government collections are placed under the care of the Institute, and as all the collections which have been made, or will hereafter be made by the Institute, must, by our charter, eventually become the property of the Government, the necessity of a harmonious and inti-

mate intercourse between the Institute and the Government, seems, to our judgment, self-evident. This idea is clearly maintained in the charter of the Institute, which makes the six heads of the different Government Departments, six of its Directors.

But the nominal charge which the Institute now has of the collections, amounts to nothing; and the same may be said of the very slight and extremely indirect influence, which it has been allowed to exercise over the Government expenditures, for the preservation and arrangement of the collections.

At present, there are three controlling, or operating powers over these subjects: 1st, the Library Committee of Congress; 2d, the Navy Department; and 3d, the Institute; but of this last, its influence is so slight, if it can be said to have any, that it would be too much to say, it is either felt or acknowledged. Such a divided state of control cannot fail to operate injuriously upon persons employed, and upon their duties, as it is difficult to say who is their head, who shall direct or superintend their operations, or who shall decide upon the propriety of expenditures, and to whom they are accountable.

It is clear to our judgment, that the desired and necessary control cannot well be exercised by the Library Committee. This Committee cannot be considered as present, upon an average, for more than six months of each year, and when present, the legislative functions of its members must occupy the greater part of their time and minds. It is equally clear, that these powers cannot well be exercised by the Navy Department. In addition to its other various and highly important duties, there is no kindred occupation in any of its interesting functions, which would give to it the means of judging of the proper occupation of the persons employed upon the collections, or of the propriety or appropriateness of any expenditure which may be made, nor can it devote the time requisite to superintend, either occupations or expenditures. Under such circumstances, surprise should not be created, if disappointment were to be experienced, in reference to anticipated results from Government patronage.

The Institute, as before remarked, possessing neither influence or authority, can exercise no control, and although it may, as a consequence, be free from responsibility, it cannot, in our opinion, be exempt from serious anxieties, nor from that moral responsibility which the country already attaches to it from its charter, and from a general impression of the power it is supposed to possess. And yet, it seems to us that the Institute is the most suitable agent for such purposes. It is always present—the very intention of its organization was to promote matters of science, to arrange and preserve specimens of natural history, and to advise on subjects connected therewith.

It ought to be supposed that the Institute possesses among its members competent knowledge for such duties, and that it has all the devotion and zeal, and exclusiveness of feeling, which the well-being of matters of science requires.

During the period when the Institute exercised more influence than now, its vigilant Vice President was daily seen in its rooms, and for hours, advising and directing, to the great benefit of its management, and to the prevention of many an injudicious expenditure.

In addition to these considerations, the organization of the Institute renders it peculiarly deserving of the confidence of Government, as it can offer as an agent for Government property and Government expenditures, a board of its own officers. The officers of the Institute consist of a President, Vice President, two Secretaries, one Treasurer, and twelve Directors. Six of these twelve Directors are the heads of Government Departments, viz: the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of War, the Secretary of the Navy, the Attorney General, and the Postmaster General; these are Directors *ex-officio*, and constitute the departments through which all Government expenditures are made. Six others are elected by the Institute, from among its members; these six at present, are, the Hon. Mr. Woodbury, the Hon. Mr. Preston,* Mr. Dayton, Fourth Auditor, Com. Warrington, of the Navy, Col. Totten, of the Corps of Engineers, and Col. Abert, of the Corps of Topographical Engineers. These are the whole of those who are recognized by the charter, as "officers of the Institute;" and constitute by the charter, "A Board of Management for the fiscal concerns of the Institute."

The whole Board consists of seventeen, five of which are the officers named, six are the heads of Government Departments, *ex-officio* Directors, and six are elected annually from the body of members. Now, as it is hardly within the verge of possibility, that the President, Vice President, Secretaries and Treasurer, of the Institute, will be filled by any other than men of honor, fitness, and good characters, so is it impossible, that eleven, (adding the six *ex-officio* Directors,) a majority of the Board, can fail to deserve the fullest confidence of the Government. Then, if we look to the six elected Directors, and reflect for a moment upon the palpable and decided interests of the Institute, and upon the vocations of its members, it is a probability so remote, that it may be considered an impossibility, that a great majority of this "Board of Management," can ever be other than persons deserving of confidence, holding important public places, and in the employ of Government.

Now then, if the Government were to place the control of its collections, and of the appropriations for arranging and preserving them, under this "Board of Management," it would be placing its property and funds where all its other property and funds are placed, namely, under its own officers, and under accustomed and long established responsibilities. But these officers are also officers of the Institute; therefore, to place this property under that Board, would also be to place it under the Institute.

Upon this plan, the Institute would be made to fulfil the objects of its organization; the most appropriate organ would be selected by the Government, and the Government would, in the persons of its own officers, retain its just control over its own property.

If it should be said that this "Board of Management" can be controlled by directions of the Institute, the answer is plain; it would be worse than idle for the Institute to come in conflict with the Government, or hazard a loss of its confidence; and it is not fair to suppose, against all experience, that the small portion of common sense necessary to avoid

* The name of the Hon. Mr. Walker, of the Senate, should have been inserted here in the place of that of Mr. Preston, as Mr. Preston not being able to attend Mr. Walker had been elected in his place.

such a consequence would not be possessed by the Institute, or that it would be unmindful of its own palpable interests.

Moreover, if this "Board of Management" should be required to lay a statement of its proceedings, annually, before Congress, it would be held to the established responsibility of the different Government Departments, and be subject, like those, to have its course and conduct investigated and corrected. Such a plan would also preserve that union between the Government and the Institute collections, so desirable, and so essential to the prosperity of both.

It has been intimated to us, that there was a desire to separate these, and to form a distinction between the Exploring Squadron and the Institute collections. A course more fatal to the prosperity of both collections, and to the great objects for which the Institute was chartered, could not well have been imagined. All the collections in the care of the Institute, from whatever sources received, are either now the property of the Government, or must by our charter eventually become so. They are the results of various donations—donations from foreign ministers, and consuls abroad; foreign institutions, and foreign Governments; donations from domestic institutions, and from citizens of our own country; donations from officers of our army and navy, the result of the official circulars from the War and Navy Departments; and deposits from individuals, and from the different Departments at Washington. Let the opinion once get abroad, that contributions from these various sources are not to receive from the protecting hand of the Government that attention which their preservation and arrangement require—let it once be supposed, that all these are to be neglected, and those only of the Exploring Squadron to be cared for, and the consequence will soon be felt, by the degenerating of the collection from a great and increasing store-house of all that our own and other countries can furnish, to that of a small museum, forever limited to the results of the Exploring Squadron.

Far be it from our intention, by these remarks, to undervalue the collection from the Squadron; we are too sensible of its excellence and too conscious of the aid it has been to the Institute, to entertain any such idea. And we fully, and most highly appreciate the intelligent labor and industry of its collectors. But its specimens neither exhaust our admiration or our wants; nor render us insensible to the highly valuable and continually increasing supplies from other sources; nor relieve us from the conviction, that upon other sources we must principally rely, if our desire be to extend the collection to a point worthy of the national character, or of comparison with similar institutions in other countries.

In justice to the Institute, it should also be borne in mind, that but for its efforts, these very specimens from the Exploring Squadron, would have been scattered we know not where; and but for those efforts, the scientific describer might have searched in vain for a specimen upon which to found a description, or to prove a discovery. It is to the Institute chiefly, that those who gathered these specimens are indebted for the present collected results of their great industry and intelligence.

The next matter which we desire to bring to your notice, is the right of disposing of duplicate specimens. Our efforts to exchange have been

paralyzed for the want of this right. The Institute is now seriously indebted to foreign Governments, to foreign and domestic institutions, and to individuals, on the principle of exchanges, because the Institute has not the right to dispose of specimens, although its cases are loaded with duplicates. The collections of the Government being placed in the Institute on deposit, the committee upon exchanges have not felt themselves at liberty to use a specimen.

We have heard with extreme regret, that it is contemplated to give all duplicates back to the collectors. Such a course would, in our opinion, be ruinous in the extreme, as it would destroy one of the great means of increasing the collection by a system of exchanges. And, as these collectors were amply paid for their labors, we can see no reason for such a course, in justice or equity; nor can we believe that such a course is desired by the Scientific Corps of the Expedition; for while other men of science are daily making collections at their own expense, and sending them to the Institute, many as presents, some in expectation of exchanges, it would place the gentlemen of this corps low in the scale of contributors to science, if, after having been so long and so liberally paid for their labors, they should yet desire the results of their labors to be given back to them. Moreover, we have understood, that by far the greater number of these specimens were actually bought by the collectors from funds furnished by the United States. We can see, therefore, no reason whatever, that they should be returned, unless the Government is disposed to abandon all idea of forming an enlarged, scientific, and interesting National Museum.

From our remarks, then, it will appear, that in our judgment there are serious defects in the present condition of affairs, which require to be remedied. One, in the absence of a responsible and adequate supervision of the arrangement and preservation of the collections, and of the persons and expenditures in reference thereto; the other, in the absence of authority to dispose of duplicates. These defects can be properly remedied only by legislative provision.

We desire it to be distinctly understood, that our reasoning has no reference to the publication of the results of the voyage, but is limited solely to the preservation, and arrangement, and exhibition of the collections. We think, however, that the Institute might also be able to give acceptable opinions, even in reference to the publication, its form and style of execution. But as there is an anxiety to possess this power by others, and as it is already placed elsewhere, we do not seek to interfere with it, not doubting, that in all its parts, it will equal similar publications by other Governments, and justify the anticipations which are now entertained of it by the learned world.

Having thus expressed our general views on these several subjects, we will conclude, by an effort to condense them, in a manner that will admit of their being incorporated in a law. This law should, in our opinion, contain provisions investing:

First. "The Board of Management" of the National Institute with the custody of all the Government collections which have been received, or which may hereafter be received from the Exploring Squadron, or other sources, with authority to make all necessary arrangements to preserve

or exhibit the same, to regulate under the supervision of the President of the United States, the number and compensations of persons employed on said duties, and to superintend the public disbursements in relation thereto.

Second. To authorize the said Board to exchange any of the duplicates of said collections with other Institutions, or with State collections, or with individuals, and to require the Board, annually, to lay before Congress a full account of their proceedings under this law.

Third. To direct the said Board to furnish to the persons who shall be employed in the writing or publication of the voyage and discoveries of the Exploring Squadron all desired facilities.

REPORT BY MR. TAPPAN,

From the Joint Committee on the Library, to whom was referred "A bill for the preservation of the collection of natural curiosities furnished by the Exploring Squadron, and from other sources," together with "remarks submitted to the Honorable Mr. Walker by Mr. Markoe and Colonel Abert."

The bill proposes, *First*, to give the managers of the National Institute the custody of all the objects of natural history belonging to the Government.

Second, To give said managers authority, first, to make all necessary arrangements to preserve and exhibit the same; secondly, to regulate the number and compensation of persons employed; thirdly, to have charge of all moneys appropriated to any purpose connected with such objects of natural history, and to superintend its disbursement; and lastly, to make such exchanges with said objects as they think proper.

The "remarks" of Messrs. Markoe and Abert—which, in passing, it may be observed, are not to be considered as the act of the National Institute, they being made apparently without the knowledge of the Institute, and probably against what would have been the views of those respectable gentlemen, who are by law *ex-officio* directors of that corporation, if they had been submitted to them—must therefore be taken to be the opinions of those two gentlemen upon the points so strenuously argued by them, which are:

"1st. That the Institute should be the organ of the Government in the arrangement and preservation of the collections, and in the supervision of the appropriations which the Government may make for those purposes.

"2d. That the Institute should have the power of disposing of all duplicates, by a system of exchanges with other Institutes, or with States, or with individuals."

The law places all the collections made by the Exploring Expedition in the custody of your committee, to enable them to prepare and publish an account of the *discoveries* made by that Expedition. The committee suppose it to be their duty, in executing this law, to select from the mass of materials placed in their hands, such as are new to science, and to

cause descriptions and figures of these to be made for publication. If the whole are to be taken out of their possession, it will be impossible for the committee to comply with the law. To obviate this difficulty, Messrs. Abert and Markoe propose that Congress shall direct them to furnish the person who may be employed in preparing the work for publication "all desired facilities."

Until the work is fully prepared for publication, no part of the collection should be disposed of, in any way. But if it was thought proper by Congress to allow some exchanges to be made, the power to do this should be vested in some individual of enlarged scientific attainments, or those things might be parted with which it would be proper to retain for publication.

But the great point with Messrs. Abert and Markoe seems to be to get hold of the appropriations made by Congress to enable the committee to execute the law; they want to expend these appropriations for the benefit of the Institute, and this benefit cannot be obtained while the committee have the control of these appropriations. It must be considered that the committee are required to prepare the work for publication, and money is appropriated to enable them to do so. The committee cannot see that the due prosecution of the work would be at all promoted by putting the money into the hands of Messrs. Markoe and Abert, or that it would be in safer and better hands by intrusting them with it, than it would be to remain in the Treasury, and be drawn out from time to time as it now is by the chairman of your committee, as it becomes due to persons employed by them.

The committee are sorry to see by the "remarks," that a private corporation in the city of Washington, which was incorporated solely with a view to enable the individuals composing it to pursue their scientific researches more successfully, has any members occupying distinguished stations who are capable of offering a direct insult to this committee in the form of "remarks," addressed to a member of the Senate. The committee allude to this (not supposing that the Senator could have read the "remarks" before they were referred to this committee) for the purpose of saying, that, notwithstanding the language used by Messrs. Markoe and Abert is so exceptionable, they have considered their propositions and arguments as though they had been couched in respectful language. The case presents two officers of the Government, one at the head of a bureau, the other a clerk in one of the public offices, who ask, as a matter of right, that they should have the supervision of a very important literary and scientific work, the publication of which, Congress has thought proper to intrust to one of its regular committees. If they have leisure for such an undertaking, in addition to the duties of their respective offices these offices must be sinecures, and should be forthwith abolished. The committee recognise no such claim of right. The National Institute was not intended to be a branch of the Government of the nation, to be sustained and supported, like the army and navy, by regular appropriations; if the charter was obtained with any such views and expectations, the sooner the authors of the "remarks," and those who think with them, disabuse themselves of this delusion and turn to their own resources, the sooner the society may commence a career of usefulness and honor. The committee take this

occasion to state, that, soon after the passage of the law providing for the publication alluded to, they made arrangements to carry it into effect, and for that purpose employed Captain Wilkes, with the consent of the Secretary of the Navy, to prepare a narrative of the voyage, with the maps, charts, and drawings, proper to explain the same, with his observations and experiments in hydrography, magnetism, meteorology, &c., &c., &c. Dr. Charles Pickering, assisted by several of the gentlemen who with him had made the collection in natural history, to class, arrange, and prepare for publication descriptions and drawings of such things in that department as are not yet described and published; which preparations are now prosecuting with care and diligence, and are in such a state of forwardness that the committee hope to be able to have the work published early in the next year. It will be a work of great magnitude and importance, and the committee hope and expect that it will be executed in such manner as fully to satisfy public expectation. In conclusion, the committee would observe, that it does not seem to them that in any event the services of the authors of the "remarks" will become indispensable to the completion of the work. They, therefore, recommend the indefinite postponement of the bill.